

Using WebQuests in 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Social Studies

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### Abstract

The purpose of this praxis research was to determine if students would achieve higher scores when learning through a WebQuest in 4<sup>th</sup> grade social studies in comparison to learning from a textbook. This action research also determined how the use of WebQuests affected student motivation. A total of 24 4<sup>th</sup> grade students participated in the study. Students were taught two units of equal difficulty; one through a WebQuest and one through their social studies textbook. The same amount of time was allotted for each unit. After completing both units, the post-test scores were compared and students were asked to fill out a questionnaire on their learning experiences. The results of the study did not show a statistically significant difference in post-test scores, however; when qualitative data from the student surveys was compared, an overwhelming majority of students showed a strong preference to learning from the WebQuest. The information gained from this study will be shared with teaching professionals to encourage the use of WebQuests in learning. As a result of this study, the use of WebQuests will be incorporated to other 4<sup>th</sup> grade subject areas including science and math. It is recommended that the research question, “Would a WebQuest be as effective if students worked independently compared to cooperative learning groups?” be considered for further study.

## Introduction

### *Context*

The school district where this action research took place is in a rural setting. It prides itself in being a district with a “small school” environment. Being a small district, the district struggles to survive with budget cuts in recent years. Despite this, the staff is driven and devoted to making the district the best of its kind. These efforts have paid off. The district was honored as one of the 2010 Blue Ribbon Schools by the U.S. Department of Education, a well-deserved recognition as the staff works hard to provide students with a quality education.

After teaching in the district for five years, it was apparent to the researcher where there was a need that was not being addressed. Given the financial limitations of the district, there was not much funding devoted to technology. This prompted the researcher to conduct this action research in the area of educational technology. Today’s students need technology to be an important part of their education starting at an early age. Technology in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is part of students’ lives and it needs to be incorporated in their education in a meaningful way. Most students are surrounded with technology through television, computers, cell phones, iPods, email and interactive video games. These things are brought into their lives at home, but what about in the classroom? What are we, as teachers, doing to incorporate technology in the classroom?

The district has been fortunate to have a very strong and supportive Parent-Teacher Association. Through this organization, every classroom in the elementary school was equipped with an interactive whiteboard. Most teachers implemented the use of their interactive whiteboard in their classroom on a daily basis. The district also has a computer lab where each grade attends a computer class for 30 minutes each week. The computer classes are taught by a library assistant who does not have any formal education in technology. The focus of these

classes is word processing and keyboarding, which is very basic. How else could technology be incorporated into the classroom involving higher level thinking?

### *Identification of the Problem*

After close observation of classroom and pedagogical practice, the area of concern that was most evident was how to effectively incorporate technology into lessons to help students become more successful. Technology is motivating and fun, but how do educators determine whether or not the students are learning from the technology that they incorporate? What types of technology could be incorporated in specific subjects such as social studies? A technological tool of great interest was a WebQuest because it appeared to be a great way to engage and motivate students in learning through discovery using technology. Through WebQuests, students would also use cooperative learning as part of the learning environment. WebQuests may have seemed to be the ideal learning situation for students, but how do we know how effective they are compared to traditional educational approaches using textbooks and worksheets?

### *Purpose*

The purpose of the research was to examine the use of WebQuests in 4<sup>th</sup> grade social studies to determine how they affect student motivation and performance when learning about regions of the United States.

### *Rationale*

When students are in 4<sup>th</sup> grade, social studies is looked at much closer when taking the state- mandated Wisconsin Knowledge Concepts Examination. Social studies becomes more of a focus in 4<sup>th</sup> grade than previous years because it is included as a subject tested on the W.K.C.E. Test. The researcher had been looking for an effective way to incorporate technology into social

studies not only to motivate students, but to offer an alternative to teaching from the textbook while meeting state standards. It can be challenging to make learning about the regions of the United States more exciting and interactive for the students. After much research, the researcher found that WebQuests meet the standards for incorporating technology effectively into social studies. However, would they work? Would students be more motivated to study about regions using them? Would tests scores be better compared to teaching from the social Studies textbook and related activities?

The information gathered from this research was very beneficial, not only to the researcher, but to colleagues. This research would help educators to effectively incorporate more technology into teaching methods. The research would also help to determine if Web Quests are more motivating to students than standard teaching methods and would possibly help improve student time on task and increase test scores.

### Review of Literature

#### *Technology in the Classroom*

Technology is a subject in education that has had much attention in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Are we educating our children for the future? Are teachers prepared to make the changes necessary to teach digital native students? How do teachers incorporate technology into the classroom effectively? These were questions that need to be addressed. According to Halat (2008), using technology in teaching and learning has positive effects on students' motivation. It also positively affects their attitudes about learning, achievement, and collaborative efforts. Students can enjoy more, work harder, and show more involvement in the classroom. Halat (2008) suggested that using technology not only enhances motivation, but it also serves as an alternative assessment tool. It allows students to be active learners and use higher level thinking skills.

When students are involved in their education, they are more motivated to learn and motivation leads to success in the classroom. Technology is a motivating tool used to create an ideal learning environment for students that leads to success.

Once seen as an isolated influence or passing fad, technology is now recognized as a primary way to communicate and learn. According to Johnson, Levine, Smith, and Haywood (2010), technology is increasingly becoming a means for “empowering students, a method for communication and socializing, and a ubiquitous, transparent part of their lives. It continues to affect the way we work, play, collaborate, communicate, learn and succeed” (p. 37). The way we think of learning is changing as technology evolves. The learners are rapidly changing. Learning environments are slowly changing to keep up. It is difficult to grasp how education needs to change to meet the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. However; one thing is obvious, technology needs to be integrated into today’s classrooms to prepare our students for tomorrow.

### *WebQuests*

One form of teaching with technology is through the use of WebQuests. Even though WebQuests have been around for over ten years, there is still much debate over their effectiveness. A WebQuest is an “inquiry-oriented activity in which most or all of the information used by learners is drawn from the Web” (Dodge, 2007) where learners are actively involved in an activity or situation. Students are sent on a quest to find information. Most WebQuests have six parts: (1) an *introduction* that sets the stage to engage the learners; (2) a *task* description that explains the problem that the students will collaboratively solve; (3) a list of online *resources* for students to use; (4) a step by step *process* learners are expected to follow; (5) a *conclusion* that allows students to share ideas and reflect on their learning; (6) an *assessment* tool such as a rubric to evaluate student work. There are two types of WebQuests:

short-term and long-term. The goal of a short-term WebQuest is the acquisition and integration of knowledge. Within one to three class periods, a learner should gain and make sense of a significant amount of information. In a long-term WebQuest, the goal is to extend and refine the knowledge over the period of a week to one month in a classroom setting (Mangelson & Castek, July, 2008). The focus of my research is on short-term WebQuests.

Research indicated that WebQuests can promote students' critical thinking, facilitate knowledge application, and develop collaborative skills in learning (Zhegn, Perez, Williamson, & Flygare, 2008). WebQuests help students engage in "meaningful and dynamic learning by working as a team" to solve problems (Zhegn, *et al.*, 2008, p. 296). They provide structured resources so that learners do not have to waste time randomly searching for reliable sources. The four underlying constructs of WebQuests include: critical thinking, knowledge application, social skills, and scaffolded learning. With WebQuests, students are challenged to learn content information and engaged in higher level thinking skills to complete the task. Students contribute collectively in order to succeed in the project. When participating in WebQuests, critical thinking is used in examining things from "multiple lenses" (Zhegn, *et al.* 2008, p. 297). This allows students to find solutions with multiple approaches and to analyze and synthesize information. Construction of knowledge application is supported by use of information, retrieval of prior knowledge to learning, and association. An important component of WebQuests is developing students' ability to apply what they have learned to new learning. Social skills are developed in WebQuests through the cooperative learning environment. Zhegn, *et al.* (2008) suggested that WebQuests emphasize interdependence with individual, as well as group, accountability. Scaffolded learning takes place when students transform what they read and

learn into a new and different form so that they have a better understanding of it. Well-designed WebQuests incorporate all these qualities to maximize effective learning.

### *Research and Reports on WebQuests*

Technology is an important part of Wisconsin's Model Academic Standards (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction/Standards, 2010). These standards emphasize the need to include technology in education. Using WebQuests effectively meets the needs of the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards for Technology Education. However; there are many important factors to keep in mind when using WebQuests to ensure effective learning is taking place. Extensive research has been done on teaching through the use WebQuests. Some have similar findings, while others bring up important issues and concerns. Ikpeze and Boyd (2007) found that WebQuests "allow students to think critically about an issue and use many skills to develop and defend an opinion" (p. 644). This is what 21<sup>st</sup> Century learners need to be doing. With so much information available to students on Internet, they need to be able to synthesize, evaluate, and transform the information. Teachers need to design instruction that challenges students to activate prior knowledge, interact with peers about issues raised, and apply what they have learned. WebQuests are designed to promote problem solving and make effective use of learners' time. They support students' thinking and involvement and to create an environment rich in high levels of thinking. Furthermore, Ikpeze and Boyd (2007) found that WebQuests, when properly developed, offer learners opportunities for multiple knowledge representation and perspectives to incorporate real-world issues. They experience content in many different ways which teaches flexibility. Well-designed WebQuests also provide learners with cognitive tools and guidance allowing them to develop complex thinking skills.



To be sure, WebQuests and technology alone cannot guarantee effective learning. The key, according to Ikpeze and Boyd (2007) is to have an “appropriate instructional design imposed upon the medium (p. 646). Their study focused on the use of WebQuests to enrich classroom interactions. They found that WebQuests can facilitate learning when tasks are selected, organized and delivered carefully. These tasks engaged students, motivated them to learn, and built high level thinking skills. Participants made real-life connections to their community. Making connections in context means helping students understand consequences in real-life complexities. This makes learning meaningful for students.

Complications that Ikpeze and Boyd (2007) noted were related to finding information on the Internet. They noted that some of the 5<sup>th</sup> grade students had problems with Internet navigation, distraction, and time. These are all disadvantages of learning with Internet. Ikpeze and Boyd (2007) suggested that it is very important to evaluate the WebQuest before using it in the classroom to ensure quality and suitability for instruction. Teachers need to ensure learners are scaffolded while also giving them opportunities for exploration and ownership. Students need to be thoughtfully guided through the WebQuest learning process. Therefore, teachers need to take adequate time to plan, organize, and supervise in a Web-based learning environment.

Teachers are constantly seeking new and innovative ways to engage students. With the development of WebQuests, students are inspired to learn in ways not previously possible (Gaskill, McNulty, & Brooks, 2006). When comparing the WebQuest teaching method against classroom demonstrations, Gaskill, *et. al* (2006) found that final exam scores when teaching introductory Biology to students were not significantly different. The qualitative data suggested that both teachers and students clearly enjoyed the WebQuests. However, the use of WebQuest activities did not lead to superior learning relative to conventional instruction. When most

students were asked whether WebQuests helped them learn the topic, most felt they had learned more, even though test scores did not support those findings.

Maddux and Cummings (2007) questioned whether or not WebQuests are developmentally appropriate. Even though popular, Maddox and Cummings (2007) indicated that questions remain about WebQuests' effectiveness. They cautioned about the developmental appropriateness of WebQuests. Their concern was that some students are not capable of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of inquiry-oriented activities, especially in elementary education. They felt that WebQuests need to be developed based on students' cognitive abilities. The fact that WebQuests do not account for learner differences, in their opinion, is a major flaw. Maddox and Cummings (2007) contended that "the content of the WebQuest, the skill in which WebQuests are written and used by teachers, and the motivation and abilities of the students" (p. 120) determine whether or not learning takes place, not the WebQuest itself. This is true of any teaching method or technique. Maddux and Cummings (2007) argued that just because WebQuests incorporate problem solving and cooperative learning, does not guarantee that these skills will be used effectively. They suggested that teachers develop WebQuests that are appropriate for their students and take the necessary time and planning to make learning successful with WebQuests.

Some researchers believe that because WebQuests provide students with a limited amount of pre-selected sites, they are obstructing students' learning. Eldridge (2010) shared results of a study that compared WebQuests to learning using a Google search. The results determined that gender played a role in the learning process. Boys demonstrated "significantly higher learning gains in closed-search condition(s)" (p. 13). There were no significant gains for boys in free-search conditions. Girls showed more or less equivalent gains in both conditions.

Even though the results suggested that boys browse more, it is also possible that closed searches provide boys with sufficient structure to keep them on track, thus not hindering learning. De Oliveira, Marti, and Cervera (2009) suggested that when “learners are motivated, their capacity to learn is not limited by the teachers’ capacity to teach” (p. 484).

### *WebQuests in Social Studies*

There are studies that suggest that integrating WebQuests in Social Studies is highly effective in teaching students multiple perspectives on life experiences in culture and diversity. Johnson (2004-2005) stated that WebQuests provide an excellent means by which to “place a student in situations to study and conceptualize the diverse perspective within America” (p. 32). This will help students to understand the diverse citizenry in America. Johnson (2004-2005) asserted that through the use of WebQuests, students can engage in learning adventures with meaningful tasks related to multiculturalism and truly understand and celebrate different perspectives.

According to Milson (2002), social studies educators have long promoted inquiry learning as a valuable method of instruction. Milson (2002) conducted a study of sixth grade students to investigate the inquiry method and Internet medium through the use of WebQuests in Social Studies. His findings suggested that students have “differing perceptions of the value of Internet sources and print sources” (p. 342). Many students found that printed sources were preferable to Internet sources. Milson (2002) also discovered that students of varying academic ability levels can conduct inquiry-based quests, but they approach and perceive the value of the quests differently. Milson (2002) suggested a cautious approach when incorporating technology to enhance teaching and learning experiences. Teachers must recognize the potential hazards of WebQuests and Internet inquiry and use them to support learning in the classroom.

*WebQuests in Today's Classroom*

Research has found that WebQuests can be used effectively in classrooms to reinforce conventional teaching strategies. Time and planning are an integral part of planning a successful WebQuest lesson in any classroom. WebQuests must be created or evaluated to make sure that they are appropriate for use in a particular lesson. WebQuests must be thoughtfully guided by the teacher to ensure students are benefitting from the quest. Utilizing appropriate WebQuests is highly motivating to students and can be very beneficial in teaching skills that traditional methods cannot. Students need experiences that foster active learning, creative thinking, and skills necessary to access new knowledge to solve problems. Inquiry-based learning like WebQuests facilitates these meaningful skills (Ikpeze & Boyd, 2007). My research focused on whether student achievement is enhanced when using a WebQuest in 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Social Studies.

*Design of Study*

Integrating technology in classrooms is the goal of many educators in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The question was how to integrate technology effectively. The researcher initiated this praxis research to inquire about the use of WebQuests. The goal of this research was to determine if students achieve higher scores and are more motivated when learning through the use of WebQuests. The researcher used a short interrupted time series research design on a single group to draw a conclusion of the effectiveness of WebQuests in 4<sup>th</sup> grade social studies. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected to triangulate the research.

*Setting and Participants*

The district where this research took place is in a rural setting in Fond du Lac County, Wisconsin. Approximately 260 students attend the only elementary school in the district. The school is made up of students ranging from 4-K through sixth grade. Ethnic minorities make up

less than one percent of the population with the vast majority being Caucasian, middle-class families. The focus of this research was on the 4<sup>th</sup> grade class which was made up of a total of 26 students. Of these students, ten were females and 16 were males. There were two minorities in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade, one Hispanic and one African-American. Two students were in the special education program receiving speech and language therapy. One student was in the evaluation process of a child study team to determine if there were special needs.

To ensure protection of my human subjects, the researcher took the CITI training and has had this research approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Marian University (Appendix A). The principal at the school the research took place has also given consent (Appendix B). Twenty-five out of 26 parents gave consent to have their child be a part of this study (Appendix C). Student assent was also received for these 25 participants (Appendix D).

Choosing all 4<sup>th</sup> grade students to be subjects in this study gave a fair representation of the general population. The study was conducted in the subjects' regular learning environment during their scheduled social studies period as not to impact the research or to place any undue stress on the subjects. All raw data collected remains confidential. Subjects did not have to answer or participate in any activity that they were not comfortable with.

### *Instruments*

Quantitative data was collected through post-tests for each of the two units following their completion (Appendices E-F) and through the use of a rubric from the WebQuest (Appendix G). The post tests were developed by the researcher in order to ensure they were of equal difficulty to provide unbiased norms. Both post-tests contained ten identical questions that pertain to the regions studied. The researcher also created the rubric (Appendix G) adapted from <http://rubistar.4teachers.org> that was used to evaluate student success on the second unit. To be

sure, the information gathered from the WebQuest was parallel to the information in the textbook. Nonparametric data was collected from each subject through a student questionnaire that the researcher created. This gave insight into student motivation and preference of learning technique (Appendix H). The researcher also used an informal observation sheet to collect qualitative data of the population (Appendix I). This data was used to compare time on task as well as personal observations and comments made by the subjects during the research. Raw data was also collected during the first unit including student worksheets on the Southwest Region that were obtained from the social studies textbook (Appendices J-M). Through the triangulation of this data, a statistical analysis was determined as to the effectiveness of WebQuests in 4<sup>th</sup> grade social studies.

### *Procedure*

To conduct a comparison between learning through textbooks and learning through WebQuests, students completed two units of equal difficulty. Students spent 40 minutes a day for 5 days on each unit for a total of 10 days (400 minutes). The first unit was taught on the Southwest Region using the social studies textbook. Students read and discussed the Southwest region together following lesson plan (Appendix N). Student worksheets were completed with an assigned partner. The researcher filled in an informal observation to record time on task, personal reflection, and comments made by students throughout the unit. Following the completion of the Southwest Region, subjects were given a post-test on that region.

The second unit, the Southeast Region, was taught through the use of a WebQuest (<http://www.ikm-manning.k12.ia.us/Technology/southeast/actindex.html>) the following week. Students worked in the computer lab in cooperative groups of three or four to complete their quest. Students worked together on their quest to complete a travel brochure on the Southeast

Region. The researcher completed an informal observation (Appendix I) to record time on task, personal reflection, and comments made by students throughout the unit. The brochures were graded based on a rubric (Appendix G) and each subject completed a post-test on the Southeast Region.

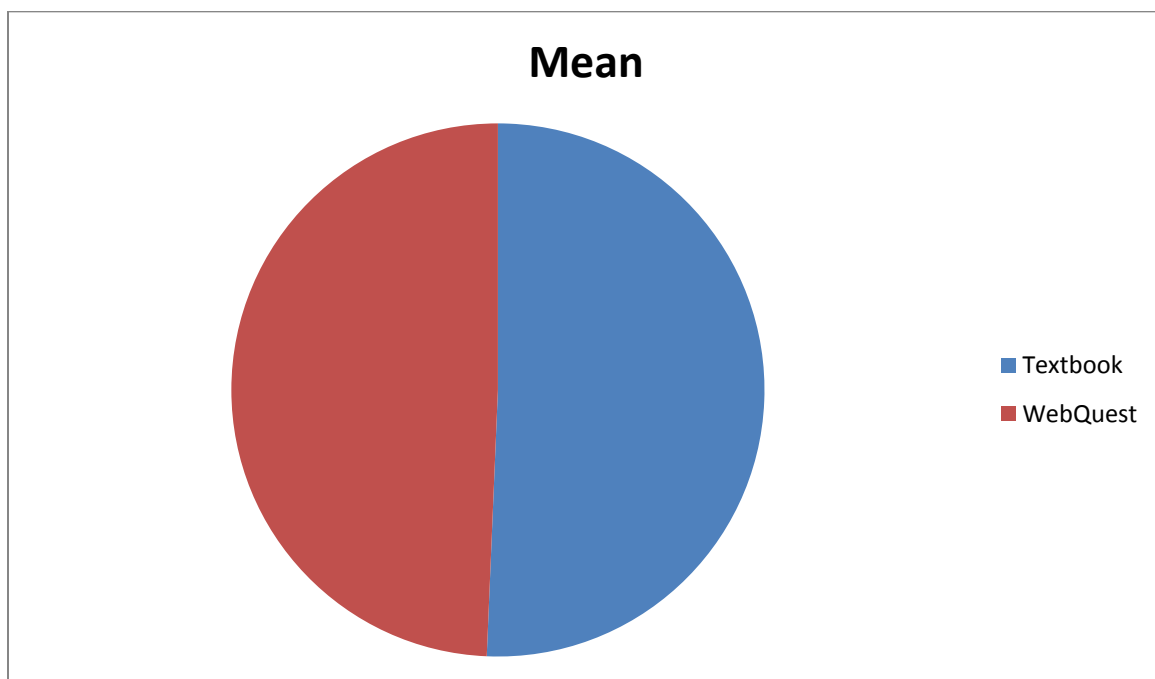
After both units were completed, each subject was given a student questionnaire to fill in based on their reflections of the learning methods of each unit. Students were assured that their opinions would be anonymous and not graded. All data was collected and analyzed.

### Results

The focus of this action research was to determine if students learned similar material better through traditional textbook and accompanying materials compared to learning through a WebQuest. The researcher wanted to determine if using WebQuests is as effective as traditional textbook teaching methods in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade social studies classroom. In order to answer this question, the researcher chose two similar lessons to study and compared two identical post-test scores after spending an equal amount of time on each unit of study. Student surveys were also used to triangulate data and form a conclusion.

The researcher used a short interrupted time series research design on my students. Post-tests were taken after studying the Southwest Region of the United States in our textbook as well as after students participated in a WebQuest on the Southeast Region of the United States through a WebQuest. The mean of the post-test from the textbook was 88.12 compared to 85.50 using the WebQuest. The two-tailed P value equals 0.3700. By conventional criteria, this difference is not considered to be statistically significant as shown on Figure 1. The mean of textbook scores was 88.12 compared to 85.80 on the WebQuest. The standard deviation of the textbook scores was 15.74 compared to 16.56 for the WebQuest tests. The standard error of

measure for the Textbook was 3.15 compared to 3.31 on the WebQuest. Both tests had a norm of 25. A summary of individual student scores is listed in Appendix O. The mean of the textbook minus WebQuest post-tests equals 2.32. There is a 95% confidence interval of this difference: from -2.92 to 7.56. The intermediate values used in calculations are  $t = 0.9136$ ,  $df=24$  and standard error of difference = 2.540.



*Figure 1.* Comparison of post-test scores by mean.

When looking at the individual student scores on the post-test (Appendix O), there were two students who had a range of 33 between their two-post test scores. Each of these students is of an ethnic minority. One student is Hispanic, the other African-American. Both students scored significantly higher on the textbook Southwest Region Post-test. This is believed to be due to the fact that both students have much more prior knowledge of the Southwest Region having lived there at some point in their life. It is not believed to be correlated to the method of learning the content of each of the subject areas. These are the only two test scores have any significant difference.



The researcher used qualitative data to determine student views on their learning. The raw data on this student survey is also included (Appendix P). Figure 2 shows the results of student preferences when it comes to learning from a textbook in comparison to learning through the use of a WebQuest. This data, including the raw data (Appendix P) is important to show the effect of student motivation and participation in learning.

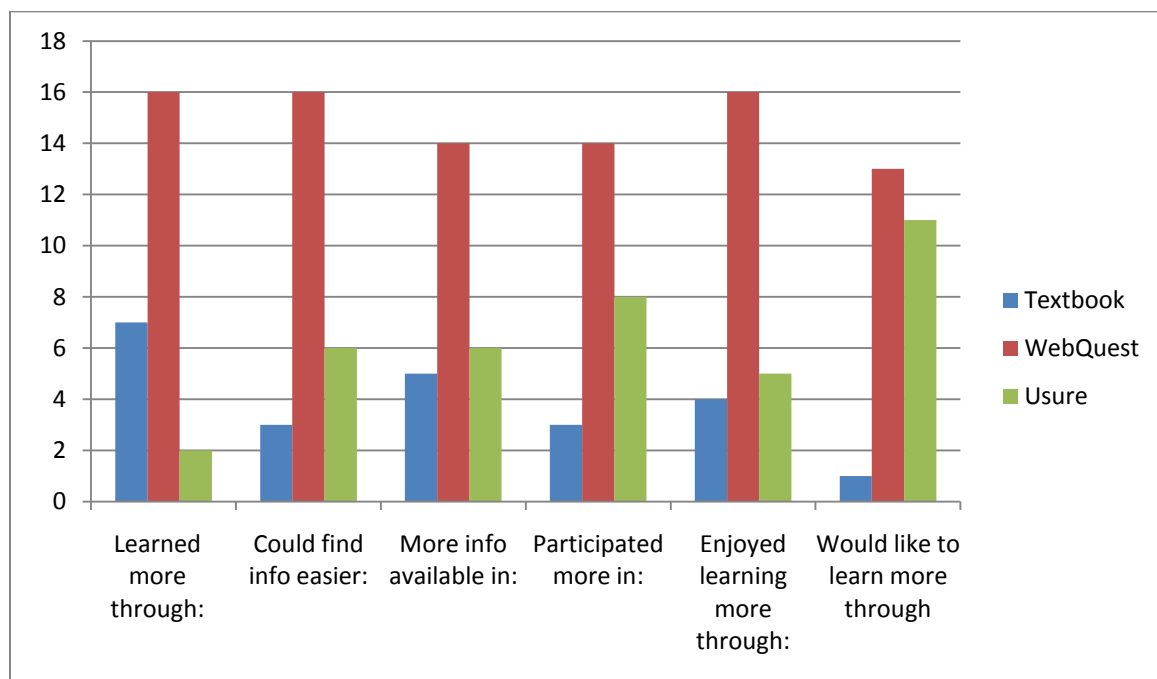


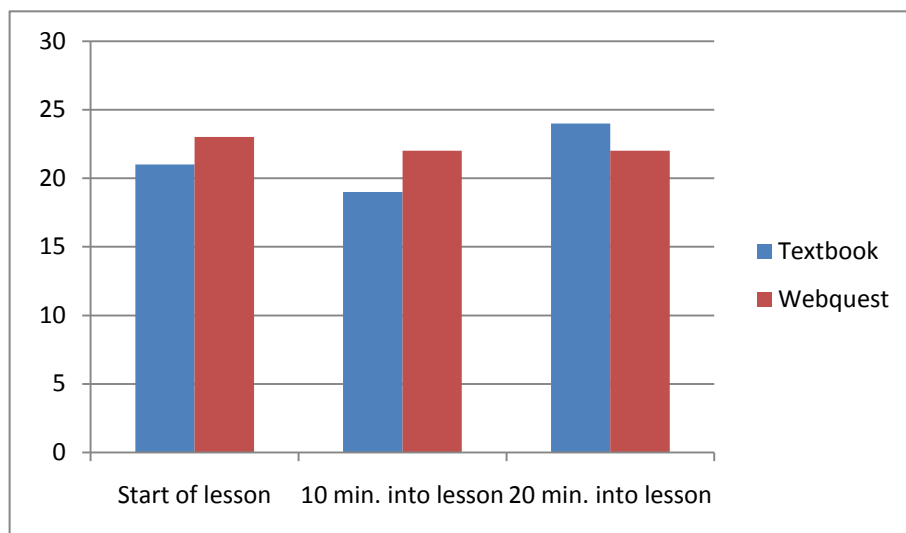
Figure 2. Student survey responses.

These results show that the majority of students preferred to learn through the use of the WebQuest. The majority of students also felt they learned more and could find information more readily through a WebQuest. This hypothesis was supported in that students gained information other than what was presented on the post-test. More than half of the students reported that they felt they learned more through the WebQuest. Because students had access to more information through the WebQuest, their learning was not limited to what was available in the textbook and could not be tested on the post-test. Students were able to learn more and access more information through the use of the WebQuest.

Of other interest is that when students were given the option of learning more through WebQuests versus textbooks, 11 students were unsure, while 13 preferred WebQuests. It is unclear as to why the majority of all other responses were in favor of WebQuests, yet with this response many students were unsure. One would anticipate student response to be much higher in favor of the WebQuest since the majority of the students chose WebQuests as favorable in all other responses. This indicated that a variety of teaching methods should be used when teaching students. One possible downfall noted in student comments (Appendix R) was the length of time it took to collect information on the WebQuest.

Other qualitative information was collected in informal observational notes of the class monitoring on-task behavior as seen in Figure 3. No significant difference was noted in the observation of on-task behavior comparing learning with a textbook and WebQuest.

On-task behavior was noted as following along in textbook, involved in finding and



*Figure 3.* On-task behavioral observation.

recording information from the WebQuest, and involvement in group discussion. Raw data from

the observations are included (Appendix Q-R). More comments were noted during the WebQuest lesson which was expected due to the nature of the two different teaching methods. Students were generally more excited about finding information on the WebQuest wanting to point out to their peers “cool” things they found (Appendix R). In both instances, the teacher redirected students to stay on-task. More students were observed to be on-task at the end of the textbook lesson, but at this point in the lesson the students were involved with completing a worksheet after reading from the text.

### Discussion

The results of this study support the researcher’s original hypothesis that students learn as well from the use of technology as they do from traditional textbook activities. Technology can effectively be incorporated into teaching to benefit students. It is difficult to determine how much information the students gather from the use of a WebQuest because it is impossible to test them on the amount of information they have retained. Having students take identical post-tests and having them score similarly proves they learned as much, but it is unclear how much more information, if any, they acquired. There is no doubt that more information and illustrations were available to them through the use of a WebQuest than what was limited through a textbook, however; one could argue that information may have been easier for students at the fourth grade level to acquire in a textbook. Finding information on the internet is a valuable skill that students will need to become familiar with. 20<sup>th</sup> century learners must be prepared to use the technology that is available to them.

The results of this study also showed that students like using technology to aid them in learning. Student motivation was not noted to be significantly higher; however student responses to the survey indicated that WebQuests were preferred to textbooks. Students who did not

choose WebQuests may prefer textbooks due to their familiarity of them. They are comfortable with textbooks and not as comfortable with finding information in a WebQuest.

This study also supports research that indicated that WebQuests can facilitate knowledge application and develop collaborative skills in learning (Zhegn, Perez, Williamson, & Flygare, 2008). WebQuests helped students engage in meaningful learning and also helped to direct them to the correct sources to obtain information.

Students involved in this study also were observed using critical thinking skills and problem solving during the WebQuest. The WebQuest did not appear to limit learning compared to a textbook. More enriched discussions were observed between students while learning through a WebQuest. The study results support research by Ikpeze and Boyd (2007) that students, through the use of WebQuests, think and are involved in higher levels of thinking.

Limitations in this study included time management and a lack of student sharing of information. Students had a difficult time staying focused on finding the information to complete their WebQuest Activity. Students often were drawn off task by other information that did not pertain to their assignment. Although students, no doubt, benefitted from these experiences, it was time consuming. After students completed their WebQuest, there was not enough time for them to share their findings with classmates. If given the opportunity to do this study again, more time would have been allotted for students to share information. This would have made the WebQuest unit a minimum of one class period (45 min.) longer than the textbook unit.

### Reflection

In recent years, there has been a push for educators to incorporate technology into their teaching. Many teachers are reluctant adapting to this trend for various reasons. Some educators

are not experienced in the latest technology. Others are not comfortable dealing with technical issues that arise. Still others are not convinced that incorporating technology is as effective as traditional teaching methods. The last reason was the focus of this study. The researcher was very pleased to discover that student scores were very similar when using technology compared to teaching from a textbook. The researcher also discovered through this study that the majority of students preferred to use technology and were more involved in their learning.

Some of the struggles the researcher encountered while doing the study included technical issues. Technical issues involved not always being able to print, access to the computers, and computers that did not work properly. Students in 4<sup>th</sup> grade are still learning when it comes to dealing with technical issues such as computers freezing, learning how to copy and paste, formatting, and typing in general. A lot of the researcher's time was spent helping the students deal with these issues. It was difficult to observe each of the groups individually because the researcher was very involved helping students solve technical problems. The more the students are exposed to working on computers, the less instructors will need to be involved with helping them solve technical problems. Even in the short time the students were involved on the WebQuest, the researcher observed that less time was devoted to technical issues toward the end of the WebQuest unit. The students were becoming more proficient in learning how to deal with issues and were also willing to help other students. Because a lot of time was devoted to technical issues, it was difficult for the researcher to ensure that all students were equal participants in the cooperative learning associated with WebQuests. In the future, it is hoped that the instructor will be able to observe this more.

Another issue the researcher had was trying to keep the students on the scheduled timeline in order to complete the WebQuest on time. Although the researcher felt the students

learned more information through the WebQuest, students still had to keep to the timeline to have a fair assessment. The researcher felt that teaching through the WebQuest took more time, but in the end the students benefitted more from the WebQuest than the textbook because their learning was not as limited. In doing future WebQuests, instructors will make sure the students have a copy of the timeline and encourage students to work on the WebQuest for homework whenever they fall behind the time schedule. If students do not have internet access at home, instructors would allow these students to use recess time or free-time to use computers at school to help stay on track.

In the future when instructors have students using WebQuests, they will make sure that they devote one day for them to share their findings. Even though the research did not include this because of time restraints, the students scored as well on the WebQuests compared to the textbook. The researcher believes that students will learn even more from one another if allowed to share their findings. An essential part of cooperative groups is sharing your findings. Again, this will add more time to the lesson, but in the end, the positive benefits of sharing will outweigh the negative effects of spending more time on the lesson.

While addressing the Wisconsin State Standards for computer technology, the researcher also found that most students were more motivated and preferred to learn through the use of WebQuests. As an educator, the researcher considered this is a very positive result. Motivation is very important to learning to ensure success. If students are not motivated, it negatively affects how well they will do and how much they learn. Through the student survey, the researcher learned a lot about student preferences. This will help not only in the area of teaching social studies, but other subject areas as well. The researcher was amazed at the ease of presenting these finding in a bar graph. This could easily be done in other areas as well.

Through this research, the researcher has learned the importance of evaluating teaching methods periodically, not only to see how effective they are, but also to get student feedback. Not all students learn the same way, so it is important to use a variety of teaching strategies. Educators need to know which strategies really work and which ones do not.

#### Recommendations

The researcher will continue to use WebQuests in teaching students in social studies. The use of WebQuests will be looked at in other subject areas starting with science. Will WebQuests have the same results used in other subject areas? Can WebQuests be effectively used in math? Would students learn as much through a WebQuest if they worked individually compared to cooperative groups?

In future research on WebQuests, the researcher would recommend that students are given time to share their findings. It is also recommended that another person be available to help students with technical issues to allow the researcher more time to observe the cooperative groups involved in the WebQuests. It is difficult to assess how much, if any, more information the students learned on the WebQuest because the questions were very specific and limited. Ideally an assessment of the WebQuest would be more open-ended allowing students to add more detail of what they learned.

#### Future Plan of Action

The results of this study indicated that using WebQuests has a very positive affect not only on learner outcome, but on learner motivation. As a result of this study, the researcher will incorporate the use of WebQuests in other subject areas as well as social studies. A variety of teaching methods will be used, commencing with incorporating WebQuests in subject areas that can be enhanced through the use of WebQuests. In social studies, WebQuests will be utilized in

learning about Wisconsin history. In science, the researcher will introduce WebQuests in the earth science unit. As not to overwhelm or confuse students, only one WebQuest will be utilized at a time. Each lesson will be planned out in detail including a student timeline to ensure students stay on track with the deadline. Students will fill out a survey after each lesson to ensure continued success with WebQuests. Assessments will be adapted to be more open-ended allowing students to be more specific in the amount of information they have acquired.

The results of this study will be shared by the researcher with staff members in the school district at the next in-service in January 2011. There has been much speculation as to the results of this study and as mentioned earlier; there is some resistance to incorporating technology into learning. By sharing these finding with colleagues, the researcher believes there will be less resistance and more pursuit into the use of technology in learning. After sharing these findings, the researcher will offer materials and resources on WebQuests to staff members and encourage them to find technology to help meet their teaching objectives. The researcher believes the positive results of this study will be very motivating to other staff members and very beneficial to students.

The results of this study will also be made available to parents of the subjects upon request. The researcher will send home a brief overview of the results and allow parents determine if they would like a copy of the detailed results. The researcher feels it is important for parents to be made aware of the results so that they encourage their children to learn through the use of technology and support the district's goals for educational technology.

This study compared student learning through the use of WebQuests and textbooks in the area of 4<sup>th</sup> grade social studies. Students scored as well on post-tests after using the WebQuest as they did on post-tests after learning through the textbook. It could be argued that students had



a more enriching learning experience through the WebQuest because learning was not as limited. This was not able to be determined through the post-test, but through a student survey. The majority of students felt more motivated and enjoyed learning more through the use of the WebQuest. The impact of this study is evidence that students need to be given the opportunity to integrate technology into their learning. The results align with the state technology standards created for students in 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Through the use of WebQuests, students are engaged in problem solving and working as a team, skills that will be needed to be successful in the real world and to develop higher order thinking. WebQuests utilize real-world, up-to-date information on the Web. Students are exposed to a broad range of information, examples and opinions in which they construct their own meaning which connects with their prior knowledge and experiences. By taking on roles in a WebQuest, students become experts on a specific aspect of a large and complex topic. The students work in groups to solve problems, utilizing their different areas of expertise, similar to work situations in real life. The work of individual students is important, as it adds to the quality of the group's solution. Teachers provide guidance on the thinking process they want students to follow which provides scaffolding. WebQuests are clearly a beneficial and sound technological approach to preparing students for the future.

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## Appendix A. IRB Approval

Researcher Name: **Marsha Primeau**

Your project titled *"Using Webquests in 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Social Studies"* has been reviewed by the Marian University Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRB). It has been determined that under rules governing protocol review, the project qualifies for expedited review and is approved for one year without modification.


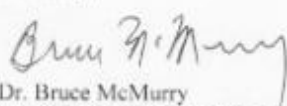
1. If you should make any future changes in the protocol involving 1) method, 2) subjects, 3) informed consent, and/or 4) subject identification, you must submit a protocol modification. Contact the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs for instructions regarding protocol modification.
2. The case number assigned to this protocol is **M101109086Q**; please reference this number in all future correspondence. You are responsible for maintaining all records related to this project for at least three years after completion of the research project.
3. Your protocol approval is valid from 09/28/2010 to 09/27/2011. You will be required to submit an Annual Progress Report (APR) to the IRB at the completion of your project. Before your proposed end date, you will be sent a reminder to complete this form and return it to the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs to disclose the status of the research, which can be found on the [Marian University IRB website](#). You may also request an extension of IRB approval for another year beyond the approved end date by completing this form.

Please do not hesitate to contact the ORSP ([orsp@marianuniversity.edu](mailto:orsp@marianuniversity.edu) or 920-923-8976) if you have questions or require additional information.

MARC HEIMERL, IRB Secretary  
Office of Research and Sponsored Programs  
Marian University  
45 S. National Avenue; Room R006  
Fond du Lac, WI 54935

Telephone: 920-923-8796  
Fax: 920-926-2114  
[www.marianuniversity.edu/irb](http://www.marianuniversity.edu/irb)

## Appendix B. Site Permission

<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; display: inline-block;"><div style="margin-left: 10px;"><b>SCHOOL DISTRICT OF OAKFIELD</b> <i>"A caring community providing Opportunities to Achieve Knowledge for Success"</i></div></div> <p style="margin-top: 20px;">Institutional Review Board Marian University 45 S. National Avenue Fond du Lac, WI 54935</p> <p style="margin-top: 20px;">Dear Institutional Review Board,</p> <p>I hereby agree to allow Marsha Primcau, from Marian University to conduct her research at Oakfield Elementary School, 200 White St. Oakfield, WI. I understand that the purpose of the study is to investigate the effectiveness of Webquests in learning.</p> <p>By signing this letter of permission, I am agreeing to the following:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MU researcher(s) have permission to be at Oakfield Elementary School, 200 White Street, Oakfield, WI.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MU researcher(s) have unrestricted access to the data collected to perform the data analysis both for presentation to Marian University and for publication purposes.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <div style="text-align: center;"> Dr. Bruce McMurry Oakfield Elementary School 9-17-10</div>	<p><b>ADMINISTRATION:</b> JOE HEINZELMAN, District Administrator JEFFREY A. MASTIN, 7 - 12 Principal BRUCE McMURRY, Pre K - 6 Principal</p> <p><b>SCHOOL BOARD:</b> ROBERT PANZER, President PENNY KOTTKE, Vice President ERVIN KRAFT, Treasurer PAUL DERCKS, Clerk MEG MURPHY-STEINKE ANGELA PATTERSON JOHN NYHUIS</p>
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OAKFIELD DISTRICT OFFICE • 200 White Street • P.O. Box 99 • Oakfield, WI 53065 • (920) 583- 3146 • Fax: (920) 583-4671  
OAKFIELD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL • 200 White Street • P.O. Box 99 • Oakfield, WI 53065 • (920) 583- 3146 • Fax: (920) 583-3820  
OAKFIELD JR/SR HIGH SCHOOL • 250 Church Street • P.O. Box 39 • Oakfield, WI 53065 • (920) 583- 3141 • Fax: (920) 583-4673

## Appendix C. Parent Permission

*School of Education***Study Title: Using Webquests in 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Social Studies****IRB Approval File Code: M101109086Q****Researchers:**

- *Principal Investigator – Marsha Primeau, (920)583-3146, mprimeau@oakfield.k12.wi.us*
- *Research Advisor – Dr. Aida Michlowski, Marian Professor*

You are being asked to allow your child to take part in a research study carried out by me, Marsha Primeau. Please read this form carefully, taking as much time as you need. Ask me, the researcher to explain anything you don't understand. This study has been approved for human subject participation by the Marian University Institutional Review Board (IRB).

You may refuse to give permission, or you may withdraw your permission for your child to be in the study, for any reason. Your child will also be asked if he or she would like to take part in this study. Even if you give your permission, your child can decide not to be in the study or to leave the study at any time.

**What is this research study about?**

This research study is being done to *determine if using Webquests in Social Studies increases students learning*. We are asking your permission for your child to be in the study because *he/she is in my 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Social Studies Class*.

**What will my child be asked to do if he or she is in this research study?**

- If your child takes part in the study, he or she will be taught two units in Social Studies. A post- test will be given for each unit. The first unit will be on the Southwest Region of the United States. This unit will be taught using the Social Studies book and curriculum/activities that go along with the lesson. The duration of the lesson will be five forty-minute class periods.
- The second unit will be on the Southeast Region of the United States. This unit will be taught through collaborative groups using a Webquest: (<http://www.ikm-manning.k12.ia.us/Technology/southeast/index.html>). Students will be assigned jobs (geographer, historian, travel agent, or map maker). The students will use the Webquest to find information about the Southeast Region of the United States. They will then create a poster to display the information they have gathered and share it with the class. The duration of the lesson will be five forty-minute class periods.
- After completing both units, the students will be asked to fill out a survey on the two different learning approaches. They will give their opinion on which lesson they preferred and felt they learned the most from. They will also be asked to list things they did not like about each lesson.
- All post-tests will be coded and confidential. Surveys are based on student opinion and will not be graded. Any student that chooses to not participate will still be expected to complete activities for the class, however; their post-tests and surveys will not be included in the research.

**Are there any benefits to my child if he or she is in this research study?**

The potential benefits to your child for taking part in this study are the incorporation of technology with social studies. There is no direct benefit to your child from being in this study.

If your child takes part in this study, it may help to integrate more technology into learning in other subject areas.

**Are there any risks to my child if he or she is in this research study?**

The potential risks to your child from taking part in this study are ...loss of confidentiality, stress of working in cooperative learning groups and presenting to the class. These risks are possible, however; very unlikely.

**Will information about my child be kept private?**

The data for this study will be coded with a key maintained separately. Only the researcher(s) will be able to link data to your child.

The data for this study will be kept private and confidential to the extent allowed by federal and state law.

- Data will be referred to only when coded. Data will be stored in a locked cabinet/classroom.
- All researchers, research staff, Institutional Review Board (IRB), and professional staff will have access to the coded data.
- Information can be shared with parents upon request.

The results of this study may be published or presented at professional meetings, but your child's name will not be used or associated with the findings. The data for this study will be kept for three years and destroyed after that.

**Are there any costs or payments for your child being in this research study?**

There will be no costs to you or your child for taking part in this study and you will not receive money or any other form of compensation for taking part in this study.

**What are my child's rights as a research study volunteer?**

Your child's participation in this study is completely voluntary. Your child may choose not to take part in this study, choose not to answer specific questions, or leave the study at any time. The child will still take part in the regular classroom activities, but the child's information will not be used in the study. There will be no penalty or loss of benefits to which you or your child are entitled if you choose not to give your permission for your child to take part or your child withdraws from the study.

**Who can I talk to if I have questions?**

If you have questions about this study or the information in this form, please contact the researcher: Marsha Primeau, Oakfield Elementary School, 200 White St. Oakfield, WI 53065, (920)583-3146. If you have questions about your rights or your child's rights as a research participant, or would like to report a concern or complaint about this study, please contact the Marian University IRB Administrator at (920) 923-8796, or e-mail [orsp@marianuniversity.edu](mailto:orsp@marianuniversity.edu), or regular mail at: Marian University ORSP, 45 S. National Avenue, Fond du Lac, WI 54935.

**What does my signature on this consent form mean?**

Your signature on this form means that:

- You understand the information given to you in this form
- You have been able to ask the researcher questions and state any concerns
- The researcher has responded to your questions and concerns
- You believe you understand the research study and the potential benefits and risks that are involved for your child.
- You understand that even if you give your permission, your child may choose not to take part in the study.

---

**Study Title:** Using Webquests in 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Social Studies

**Researchers:**

- *Principal Investigator – Marsha Primeau, (920)583-3146, [mprimeau@oakfield.k12.wi.us](mailto:mprimeau@oakfield.k12.wi.us)*
- *Research Advisor – Dr. Aida Michlowski, Marian Professor*

**Statement of Consent**

I give my voluntary permission for my child to take part in this study. I will be given a copy of this consent document for my records.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent or Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name of Parent or Guardian

**Statement of Person Obtaining Informed Consent**

I have carefully explained to the parent of the child being asked to take part in the study what will happen to their child.

I certify that when this person signs this form, to the best of my knowledge, he or she understands the purpose, procedures, potential benefits, and potential risks of his or her child's participation.

I also certify that he or she:

- Speaks the language used to explain this research
- Reads well enough to understand this form or, if not, this person is able to hear and understand when the form is read to him or her
- Does not have any problems that could make it hard to understand what it means for his or her child to take part in this research.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Person Obtaining Consent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Marsha Primeau  
Printed Name of Person Obtaining Consent

Principal Investigator  
Person's Role in Research Study



## Appendix D. Student Assent

*School of Education***Study Title:** Using Webquests in 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Social Studies**IRB Approval File Code:** M101109086Q;**Researchers:**

*Principal Investigator: Marsha Primeau, (920)583-3146,*  
[mprimeau@oakfield.k12.wi.us](mailto:mprimeau@oakfield.k12.wi.us)

*Research Advisor: Dr. Aida Michlowski, (920) 923-8749,*  
[amichlowski@marianuniversity.edu](mailto:amichlowski@marianuniversity.edu)

- My name is *Marsha Primeau*. I am doing a classroom project. I am asking you to take part in my study because you are a student in my social studies class.
- Your parent(s) know I am talking with you about this project, but it is up to you to decide if you want to be in the study. This form will tell you more about it to help you decide whether or not you want to take part in it. If something is not clear, ask me.
- I am doing this project because I want to find out if using Webquests will help you learn social studies better.
- If you decide to be in the study, I will ask you to do the following:
  - Study two units in Social Studies for two weeks. The duration of each unit will be five forty-minute class periods
  - The first week you will study the Southwest Region of the United States. This unit will be taught using our Social Studies book and curriculum/activities that go along with the lesson. Then, you take a test on the Southwest region unit at the end of the first week.
  - The second week, you will study the Southeast Region of the United States. This unit will be taught through collaborative groups using a Webquest: <http://www.ikm-manning.k12.ia.us/Technology/southeast/index.html>. You will be assigned jobs and work as a group to collect and report information. Then you take a test on the Southeast region unit at the end of the second week.
  - You will be observed during these two weeks. I will jot down your performance.
  - After completing both units, you will be asked to fill out a survey on the two different learning approaches. You will give your opinion on which unit you preferred and which one think you learned the most from. You will also be asked to list things you did not like about each lesson.
- You can choose not to participate in the research, however; you will still be expected to participate in class activities as these units are part of our regular curriculum.
- I don't think anything bad will happen if you decide to take part in this project, however, you might get tired, get bored, feel nervous or anxious, disappointed

with the group you are assigned to but I will try to prevent this from happening by doing the following:

- assuring you that your test scores and performance will not affect your grade
  - allowing you to skip questions on the test and survey that you don't want to answer
  - giving you the opportunity to remove yourself from the group at anytime
  - observing proper posture when working at the computer or reading a book
  - allowing frequent breaks
- Taking part in this research study may not help you get straight A's, but it might help you discover other interesting and fun ways to get information through webquests
  - Everything you say and do in this project will be confidential, like a secret. When you take the tests, you will be assigned a secret code. And when you fill out the survey form, you are asked not to put your name so you will be anonymous or unknown. I won't tell your parents or anyone else what you say or do while you are taking part in the study. When I write my report about what I learned in the study, I won't tell them your name or the name of anyone else who took part in the research study.
  - There will be no costs to you for taking part in this study. And you will not receive money or any other form of compensation for taking part in this study.
  - You don't have to be in this study. It is up to you. You can say no now or you can change your mind later. No one will be upset or angry with you whatever you choose to do.
  - If anything in the study worries you or makes you uncomfortable, let me know and we will stop immediately.
  - The Marian University Institutional Review Board has reviewed this study to make sure that you will be safe. If you have questions about your rights in the study, or if you are unhappy about something that happens to you in the study, you can contact them at (920) 923-8796 or [orsp@marianuniversity.edu](mailto:orsp@marianuniversity.edu).
  - You can ask us questions anytime and you can talk to your parent any time you want. We will give you a copy of this form that you can keep. You can ask also ask my research teacher any time you want. Her name is Dr. Aida Michlowski and you can call her at 920 923 8749.
  - Do you have any questions now that I can answer for you?
  - If you sign your name on this form, it means that:
    - You understand the information given to you in this form
    - You have been able to ask the researcher questions or talk about your concerns

- The researcher has answered your questions and concerns
- You understand what the teacher/researcher explained about what you will be asked to do.
- You will keep this portion of the letter and return the signature page to the teacher/researcher

**Study Title:** Using Webquests in 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Social Studies

**Researchers:**

*Principal Investigator: Marsha Primeau, (920)583-3146,  
[mprimeau@oakfield.k12.wi.us](mailto:mprimeau@oakfield.k12.wi.us)*

*Research Advisor: Dr. Aida Michlowski, (920) 923-8749,  
[amichlowski@marianuniversity.edu](mailto:amichlowski@marianuniversity.edu)*

*(If relevant: Put an X on this line if it is okay for us to record you \_\_\_\_\_)*

**Statement of Consent**

I give my voluntary consent to take part in this study. I will be given a copy of this consent document for my records.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name of Participant

**Statement of Person Obtaining Informed Consent**

I have carefully explained to the person taking part in the study what he or she can expect.

I certify that when this person signs this form, to the best of my knowledge, he or she understands the purpose, procedures, potential benefits, and potential risks of participation.

I also certify that he or she:

- Speaks the language used to explain this research
- Reads well enough to understand this form or, if not, this person is able to hear and understand when the form is read to him or her

- Does not have any problems that could make it hard to understand what it means to take part in this research.

---

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent

---

Date

Marsha Primeau  
Printed Name of Person Obtaining Consent

Principal Investigator  
Role in the Research Study

## Appendix E. Southwest Region Post-test

Student id: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Name the nine states in the Southwest Region.

_____	_____
_____	
_____	_____
_____	
_____	_____
_____	

2. Name 3 major cities that are located in the Southwest Region.

_____	_____
_____	

3. List three different landforms located in the Southwest Region.

_____
_____
_____

4. Describe the winter weather pattern for the Southwest Region. (What is the average temperature in the winter?)

_____
_____

5. Describe the summer weather pattern for the Southwest Region.  
(What is the average temperature in the summer?)

---

---

6. Which state in the Southwest Region has the greatest population?

---

7. List **two** major tourist attractions in the Southwest Region.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

8. Name two major types of agriculture/industry for the Southwest Region.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

9. Name a famous person from the Southwest Region.

---

10. Identify the Southwest Region. A B C D or E (circle one)



## Appendix F. Southeast Region Post-Test

Student id: \_\_\_\_\_

## Southeast Region Post-test

1. Name the twelve states in the Southeast Region.

_____	_____
_____	
_____	_____
_____	
_____	_____
_____	
_____	_____
_____	

2. Name 3 major cities that are located in the Southeast Region.

_____	_____
_____	

3. List three different landforms located in the Southeast Region.

_____
_____
_____

4. Describe the winter weather pattern for the Southeast Region. (What is the average temperature in the winter?)

---

---

5. Describe the summer weather pattern for the Southeast Region. (What is the average temperature in the summer?)

---

---

6. Which state in the Southeast Region has the greatest population?

---

7. List **two** major tourist attractions in the Southeast Region.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

8. Name two major types of agriculture/industry for the Southeast Region.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

9. Name a famous person from the Southeast Region.

---

10. Identify the Southeast Region. A B C D or E (circle one)





## Appendix G. WebQuest Rubric

**Making A Brochure : Southeast Region**Teacher Name: **Mrs. Primeau**

Student Code: \_\_\_\_\_

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Content - Accuracy	All facts in the brochure are accurate.	99-90% of the facts in the brochure are accurate.	89-80% of the facts in the brochure are accurate.	Fewer than 80% of the facts in the brochure are accurate.
Writing - Organization	Each section in the brochure has a clear beginning, middle, and end.	Almost all sections of the brochure have a clear beginning, middle and end.	Most sections of the brochure have a clear beginning, middle and end.	Less than half of the sections of the brochure have a clear beginning, middle and end.
Spelling & Proofreading	No spelling errors remain after one person other than the typist reads and corrects the brochure.	No more than 1 spelling error remains after one person other than the typist reads and corrects the brochure.	No more than 3 spelling errors remain after one person other than the typist reads and corrects the brochure.	Several spelling errors in the brochure.
Attractiveness & Organization	The brochure has exceptionally attractive formatting and well-organized information.	The brochure has attractive formatting and well-organized information.	The brochure has well-organized information.	The brochure's formatting and organization of material are confusing to the reader.
Knowledge Gained	All students in the group can accurately answer all questions related to facts in the brochure and to technical processes used to create the brochure.	All students in the group can accurately answer most questions related to facts in the brochure and to technical processes used to create the brochure.	Most students in the group can accurately answer most questions related to facts in the brochure and to technical processes used to create the brochure.	Several students in the group appear to have little knowledge about the facts or technical processes used in the brochure.

Graphics/Pictures	Graphics go well with the text and there is a good mix of text and graphics.	Graphics go well with the text, but there are so many that they distract from the text.	Graphics go well with the text, but there are too few and the brochure seems "text-heavy".	Graphics do not go with the accompanying text or appear to be randomly chosen.
Sources	Careful and accurate records are kept to document the source of 95-100% of the facts and graphics in the brochure.	Careful and accurate records are kept to document the source of 94-85% of the facts and graphics in the brochure.	Careful and accurate records are kept to document the source of 84-75% of the facts and graphics in the brochure.	Sources are not documented accurately or are not kept on many facts and graphics.
Information	All questions/activities were completed.	90-99% of questions/activities were completed.	89-80% of questions/activities were completed.	Less than 80% of questions/activities were completed.

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix H. Student Questionnaire

## Social Studies Regions Student Questionnaire

### Southwest and Southeast

We have just finished learning about two regions of the United States: the Southwest and the Southeast. We learned about these two regions in **different** ways. We learned about the Southwest Region by reading and doing activities from our Social Studies book. We learned about the Southeast region through a Webquest. I am looking for feedback on your thoughts of the teaching techniques used for these two regions. Your answers should be your personal opinion and will not be graded. **Please be honest in answering these questions to determine how you learn best.** You do not have to write your name on the survey. All answers will remain anonymous.

**Circle A, B, or C.**

1. I felt that I learned more about each region through:  
A. Textbook and activities   B. Webquest   C. Unsure
2. I felt that I could find information more easily in:  
A. Textbook and activities   B. Webquest   C. Unsure
3. I felt more information was available to me in:  
A. Textbook and activities   B. Webquest   C. Unsure
4. I participated more in:  
A. Textbook and activities   B. Webquest   C. Unsure
5. I enjoyed learning more through:  
A. Textbook and activities   B. Webquest   C. Unsure
6. I would like to learn more in Social Studies through:  
A. Textbook and activities   B. Webquest   C. Unsure
7. I enjoyed learning through the **textbook and activities** because:

---

---

8. I enjoyed learning through the **Webquest** because:

---

---

9. Is there anything about learning through Webquests or the textbook that you did not like?

---

---

Other comments:

---

---

Thank you for your comments!

## Appendix I. Observational/notes

## Classroom Observation

Date:

Lesson:

---

Time:

Task:

Number of students on task (following along in textbook, finding information on website, involved in group discussion.)

Time:

Task:

Number of students on task (following along in textbook, finding information on website, involved in group discussion.)

Time:

Task:

Number of students on task (following along in textbook, finding information on website, involved in group discussion.)

(10 minutes between each observation)

Other Comments: (jot down comments word-for-word questions uttered by students)

## Appendix J. Social Studies Workbook p. 70

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Lesson Review**

Use with Pages 303-304.


## Lesson 1: A Land of Canyons

The Grand Canyon is one of the most amazing landforms in the United States.

**Directions:** Suppose that you are going to write an article about the Grand Canyon for your school newspaper. Complete the chart below to help you get started. You may use your textbook.

### The Grand Canyon

HOW was it formed?	
WHO first lived there? WHAT were their lives like?	
WHO still lives there?	
WHO explored there?	
WHO helped it become a tourist attraction? HOW?	
WHAT can you do there today?	

 **Notes for Home:** Your child learned about the history of the Grand Canyon.

**Home Activity:** Has your family ever visited a national park? Perhaps you have been to the Grand Canyon. Discuss with your child any national parks that you have visited or would like to visit.

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**70** Lesson Review

Workbook

## Appendix K. Social Studies Workbook p. 72

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Lesson Review**

Use with Pages 306–311.


## Lesson 2: Climates in the Southwest

Much of the Southwest has a hot, dry climate.

**Directions:** Using information from this lesson, circle the term in parentheses that best completes each sentence. You may use your textbook.

1. A desert is an area that gets less than (ten, five) inches of rain each year.
2. Some parts of the Southwest have an (arid, icy) climate but are not deserts.
3. The eastern part of (Colorado, Texas) has a hot, humid climate.
4. (Oklahoma, New Mexico) can sometimes have a humid and windy climate.
5. Thunderstorms, blizzards, and tornadoes are caused when (wet, cold) and warm air masses meet.
6. Thunderstorms, blizzards, and (tornadoes, hurricanes) are possible in Oklahoma.
7. The saguaro is a kind of cactus that grows naturally in the (Sonoran Desert, Central Plain).
8. The saguaro's white, night-blooming blossom is (Oklahoma's, Arizona's) state flower.
9. To grow big and strong, the saguaro spreads its (roots, flowers) to drink in the rainwater.
10. The cactus can store enough (food, water) to keep alive through long, dry periods.
11. The saguaro provides shelter for desert (plants, animals).
12. Some trees grow in a savanna, but most of the plants growing here are (cactuses, grasses).
13. Piñon pines and junipers grow in the (savannas, deserts) of the Southwest.

Notes for Home: Your child learned about the climates of the Southwest region.  
Home Activity: Discuss with your child the climate of your community. How is it similar to or different from the climates in the Southwest region?

 72 Lesson Review

Workbook

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## Appendix L. Social Studies Workbook p. 74


Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Vocabulary Review**  
Use with Chapter 10.

**Vocabulary Review**

**Directions:** Use each of the vocabulary terms from Chapter 10 in a sentence. Write the sentences on the lines provided. You may use your glossary.

1. adobe  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. pueblo  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. arid  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. savanna  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. refinery  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. gusher  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

 **Notes for Home:** Your child learned the vocabulary terms for Chapter 10.  
**Home Activity:** Choose one of the terms from this chapter. Take turns with your child using the term in a sentence. See how many sentences you can create!

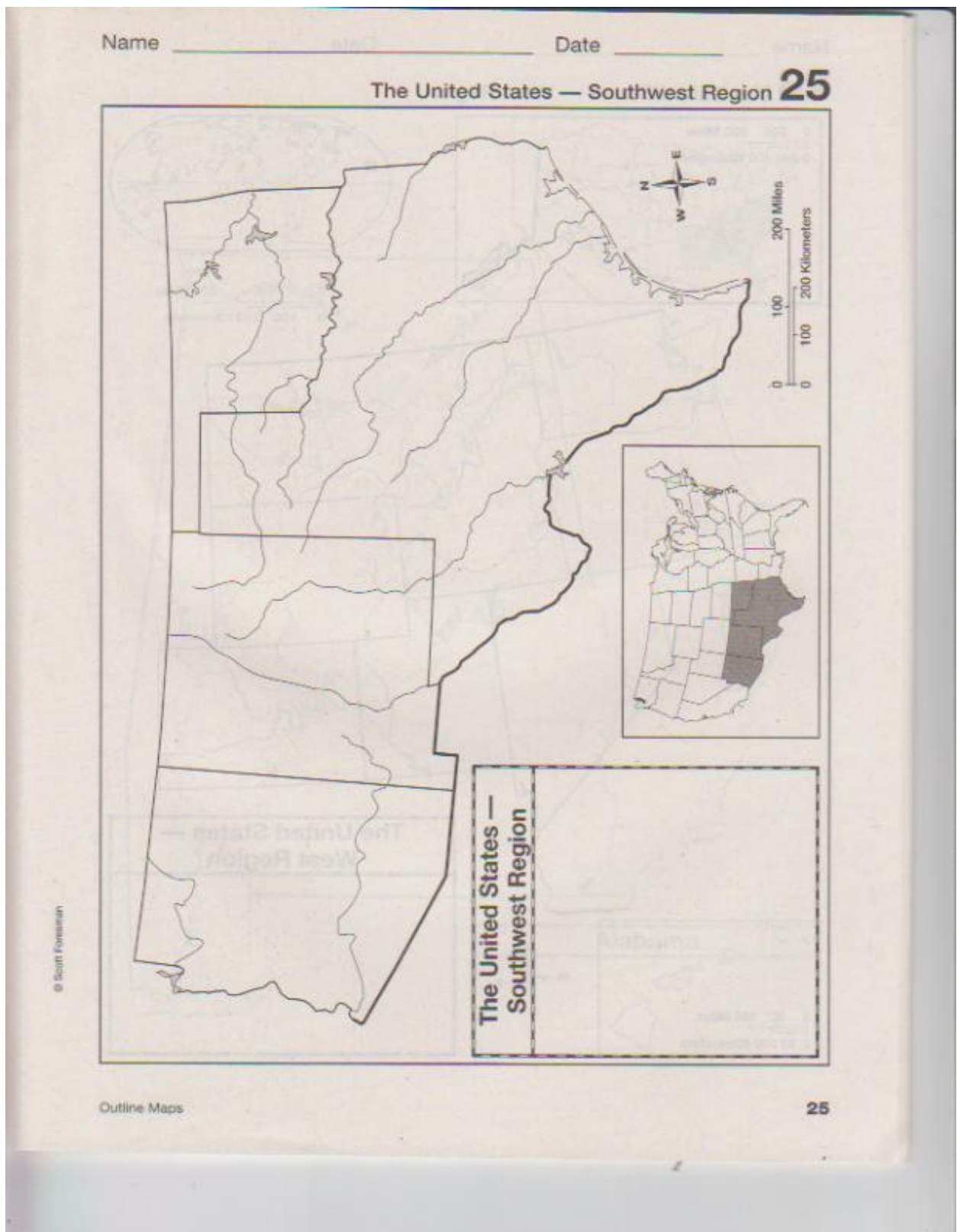
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**74** Vocabulary Review

Workbook



## Appendix M. Map of Southwest Region



## Appendix N. Lesson Plan

Week 1: Southwest Region Textbook Lesson	Week 2: Southeast Region Webquest Lesson
<p>Day 1 Introduce Southwest Region- Unit 5 Welcome to the Southwest- pages 292-297 Land and Resources pages 298-303 Read and discuss Workbook page 70: Land of Canyons</p>	<p>Day 1 Introduce the Southeast Region Webquest Explain roles/duties Go through Webquest and break into groups to explore w/group Start Web quest</p>
<p>Day 2 Climates in the Southwest Pages 308-311 Oil and Technology Pages 314-317 Read and discuss Workbook page 72: Climates in the Southwest</p>	<p>Day 2 The Weather in the Southwest Webquest Tour Stop #1 Tour stop #3</p>
<p>Day 3 The People and Places of the Southwest Pages 322-328 Vocabulary- Workbook page 74 Map outline of Southwest</p>	<p>Day 3 Famous People and Famous Places Pages 278-281 Webquest Tour Stop #2</p>
<p>Day 4 Finish map outline- Label states and capitol Write population of each state</p>	<p>Day 4 Webquest Tour Stop #2 (finish ) and #3</p>
<p>Day 5 Review/Questions Post-test /Survey</p>	<p>Day 5 Webquest Tour Stops # 4 and #5 (divide groups in half) Post-test /Survey</p>

## Appendix O. Student Post-test Raw Scores.

Student id #	Textbook	WebQuest	Range
1	94	100	6
2	94	100	6
3	89	96	7
4	100	85	15
5	78	81	3
6	100	96	4
7	100	67	33
8	75	56	19
9	100	96	4
10	89	56	33
11	67	85	18
12	78	63	15
13	100	100	0
14	89	85	4
15	83	96	13
16	100	96	4
17	83	93	10
18	94	93	1
19	28	41	13
20	100	93	7
21	100	96	4
22	94	100	6
23	94	100	6
24	83	78	5
25	94	93	1

Results given in percentage correct

**Group Text WebQuest**

Mean 88.12 85.80

SD 15.74 16.56

SEM 3.15 3.31

N 25 25

## Appendix P. Student Survey Raw Data.

## Social Studies Regions Student Survey Southwest and Southeast

We have just finished learning about two regions of the United States: the Southwest and the Southeast. We learned about these two regions in **different** ways. We learned about the Southwest Region by reading and doing activities from our Social Studies book. We learned about the Southeast region through a Webquest. I am looking for feedback on your thoughts of the teaching techniques used for these two regions. Your answers should be your personal opinion and will not be graded. **Please be honest in answering these questions to determine how you learn best.** You do not have to write your name on the survey. All answers will remain anonymous.

Circle A, B, or C.

### NUMBER OF STUDENT RESPONSES IN BOLD

1. I felt that I learned more about each region through:
 

A. Textbook and activities	B. Webquest	C. Unsure
<b>7</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>2</b>
2. I felt that I could find information more easily in:
 

A. Textbook and activities	B. Webquest	C. Unsure
<b>3</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>6</b>
3. I felt more information was available to me in:
 

A. Textbook and activities	B. Webquest	C. Unsure
<b>5</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>6</b>
4. I participated more in:
 

A. Textbook and activities	B. Webquest	C. Unsure
<b>3</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>8</b>
5. I enjoyed learning more through:
 

A. Textbook and activities	B. Webquest	C. Unsure
<b>4</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>5</b>
6. I would like to learn more in Social Studies through:
 

A. Textbook and activities	B. Webquest	C. Unsure
<b>1</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>11</b>

7. I enjoyed learning through the **textbook and activities** because:

### STUDENT RESPONSES:

- 4-I'm not sure
- because not all the information is right.
- it was fun seeing all the cool stuff in the pictures.[sic]
- It was all right there except [sic] for turning pages.
- We can read and is more interesting [sic]
- I can learn about the Regions [sic]
- I Lik[sic] reading

- I liked the pictures of the animals.
- Learning about the Grand Canyon
- I do not now [sic]
- It has more facts
- There are all the state on a page and then I now [sic] what states we are talking about
- I thought that it was easier because you didn't need to tap any keys
- becase [sic] it had the important words highlighted
- You could just go to a certain page
- It was fun because there was pictures of the regions.
- I could see pictures and photos [sic] of great places.
- It was fun reading about the states.
- I like words.
- You can have a chance to read if you like reading.
- We read together witch [sic] let's [sic] me follow along easier.

8. I enjoyed learning through the **Webquest** because:

### **STUDENT RESPONSES**

- because it is on a computer and the computer is always right.
- you can lern [sic] more
- It was easy to find the information you needed and fast.
- I do not like learning throw [sic] the webquest
- I just got the capital
- it was fun
- all the different websites.
- You can find more facs [sic] and it is labeld [sic].
- more info
- I do not now [sic]
- Because its [sic] very fun.
- It is something new.
- It was different.
- I like finding stuf [sic] on it and I like to control [sic] it.
- I just like the textbook better.
- im not shure [sic]
- you could just go to google [sic]
- It was fun to look up pictures.
- It was cool to look a [sic] photos and stuff
- we are on the web
- It goes a lot faster.
- I like the cars.
- I like being on computers and webquest [sic] are on computers
- unsure
- Computers are really fun and better because they have way more facts than a textbook.

9. Is there anything about learning through Webquests or the textbook that you did not like?

### **STUDENT RESPONSES**

7-No

- The webquest was in a shorter amount of time the facts didn't stick in my head. [sic]
- you could get stuned [sic] on the computer.
- On the webquest we harly [sic] found anyting [sic]
- Nop [sic]
- not really
- I rilly Do not like all the reading and finding information. [sic]
- I didn't like the Webquest because you had to worry about tapping keys.
- needs to tell more information
- In the Webquest I didn't like looking up all the websites
- I did not like th [sic] text book because we weren't on the web.
- All the reading!
- Webquest [sic] take way longer than textbook.

Other comments:

## STUDENT RESPONSES

7-no

- We didn't have enough time to do it.
  - website is not comforble [sic] for me.
  - none
  - Nop [sic]
  - I like the webquest!
- 2-I liked the textbook better.
- I liked the webquest better.
  - I like going on the internet than the textbook. [sic]
  - We should do Webquests more often!

Thank you for your comments!

## Appendix Q. Textbook Lesson Observational Notes.

25 total

Classroom Observation [10-minute interval]

Date: 10-22

Lesson: SW - Climates/Technology

---

Time: 1:20 Task: Reading from text

Number of students on task

- 4      + 21      3 - not following along  
(fighting under desk)

---

Time: 1:30 Task: Reading from text

Number of students on task

- 6      + 19      4 not following  
playing w/ pencil      Discussion  
daydream      12 raised  
   hands  
   to answer

---

Time: 1:40 Task: Working on worksheet  
Pg. 72

Number of students on task

- 1      + 24      daydream

---

Other Comments: ( jot down comments word-for-word questions uttered by students)

Do you get this one?  
I found this answer.  
I'll get number 3.

Come on, turn the page.  
No, it's not

On Task Behaviors: following along in textbook, finding information on website, involved in group discussion.

## Appendix R. WebQuest Lesson Observation Notes.

Classroom Observation [10-minute interval]

Date: 10/27 (25)

Lesson: WebQuest SE Tour Stop 4  
Computer lab

---

Time: 1:30 Task: Finding info, record data

Number of students on task  
23 - 2 - looking @ other group

---

Time: 1:40 Task: Finding data

Number of students on task  
22 - 3 RR - doodle

---

Time: 1:50 Task: Finding data

Number of students on task  
22 - watching clock  
looking around  
- not involved w/ group

---

Other Comments: (jot down comments word-for-word questions uttered by students)

"This is cool!"

"What's next?"

"Did you find that?"

What stop are you on?

It's my turn to be on the computer.

Hey - this is neat.

Look at this

On Task Behaviors: following along in textbook, finding information on website, involved in group discussion.